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**5 DAY LESSON PLAN**

Lesson Topic: Work Songs in American Sharecropper Mississippi

Grade Level: 6-8 and ESOL

**Broad-Based Theme: Place as Text in the Most Southern Place on Earth**

**Disciplines**

1. African American History
2. Language Arts
3. Music
4. Group Dynamics/Cooperative Learning

**Generalizations (3 or 4):**

1. Work songs make work easier.
2. Work songs comfort those doing the work.
3. Work songs are unique in their form.
4. African rhythms and phrasing inspire original songs

**Guiding Questions (GQ):**

1. What is the purpose of a work song?
2. How is a work song constructed?
3. Is there an underlying or unspoken message in a work song?
4. Think of a time in your life you have used a work song

Lesson Plan Objective(s):	Gen/GQ #	Procedure:	Materials/Resources	Evaluation related to objectives
Students will examine a work song for content.	#1	<b>A. Introduction/Motivation</b>  Work songs sung by prison work gangs are a rich part of our musical culture.	1. Introduction to prison gangs at Parchman through Internet resources.	1. Short responses to teacher questions about the origin and purpose of a work song.
Students will examine a work song for musical structure.	#2	Work songs have a specific purpose.	2. Definition of a work song.	2. Cloze and fill in the blank exercise to assess linguistic and content knowledge.
Students will analyze the linguistic structure of a work song.	#3	Work songs are highly rhythmic, and they facilitate hard, physical work.	3. Copy of Po' Lazarus by James Carter and the Prisoners	2. Cloze and fill in the blank exercise to assess linguistic and content knowledge.
Students will reflect on the hidden message in Po' Lazarus.	#3	Work songs give control back to the workers since they create the lyrics, and decide how to deliver them with their voices.	4. Video clips from Alan Lomax film of a prison gang hoeing together, and another group repairing a railroad track.	3. Participation in class discussions.

		<p><b>B. Study/Learning Activities</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Examination of key vocabulary</li> <li>2. Teach students AAB structure of the song</li> <li>3. Discuss prison work gangs</li> <li>4. Show Lomax clip for background knowledge</li> <li>5. Cloze activity for understanding sentence structure and fill in the blank for reinforcing content</li> <li>6. Play O' Brother, Where Art Thou soundtrack of Po' Lazarus.</li> </ol> <p><b>C. Culmination</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Sing along, clap along with video clips.</li> <li>2. Students break into groups and compose own song</li> </ol> <p><b>D. Follow-up</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Internet research for another example of a work song. (To be placed on a jump drive along with a copy of the lyrics.)</li> <li>2. Teacher introduces another song and students analyze it using criteria above.</li> <li>3. Listen to some West African music then compare and contrast</li> </ol>	<p>5. O' Brother, Where Art Thou soundtrack (audio of Po' Lazarus)</p>	
<p>Day 1 Handout written song lyrics, discuss vocabulary and social</p>				

<p>context</p> <p>Day 2 Play song, sing song, clap hands. Mimic chopping cotton</p> <p>Day 3 Show videos, talk about prison labor and song writing as a way to pass time in a rhythmic job: safety, boredom, bonding</p> <p>Day 4 Discuss musical aspects of the song, AAB structure, students compose own song in small groups</p> <p>Day 5 Listen to African music, talk about rhythms that may have inspired work songs, students practice then perform their own song</p> <p>Day 6 Internet research: find another example of a work song, bring it in on a thumb drive and share with the class</p>				
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